

# UPSTAIRS CLUB BULLETIN

Friends, Students and Alumni of the Stone-Camryn School of Ballet

Volume I - January 12, 1959

Chicago, Illinois

An Educational Group

CHRISTMAS CARDS ... what an avalanche each year .. a nice custom to be sure...however commercialized too much ...it is wonderful to receive all the half-letters that are written on cards by old friends and students ...filling in the gaps between visits - some with good news and some with bad news ...good or bad one always wants to know what happens to their friends and Christmas cards can do this ... but ... there are hundreds of cards that are merely addressed with no message .. better to save the postage...the studio dressing room walls covered in cards represent a very wide circle of friends... MARY CLARKE English critic in London; WALTER GORE, Ballet Master in Frankfurt Germany and TERESA RUDOLPH the queen of the ice skaters in Garmisch; THEODORE SMITH, Detroit's revered Master of the Cecchetti Society - SISTER MARY JOSITA now at Ladysmith, Wis., ... dancers, BAMBI & ROD ALEXANDER, FRED STROHEL, DANIELLE BERGE and TERRY DeMARI.. Dance Directors ERNIE FLATT, EDDIE NOLL, DOROTHY HILD and local BETTY GOUR .... teachers MYRA HALSIG, SYLVIA HAMER, BARBARA SEAVER, EDNA McRAE, ELLIS-DUBOULAY, OREST SERGIEVSKY, MARGARET CRASKE, and HELEN JONES, spending the holidays in the hospital in traction - RUTH PRYOR now tied down more than ever with her school a BALLET THEATRE branch now - two lovely photos of JESSIE WHALEY with love to all - DOROTHY YOUNG teaching ballet in Eustis, Florida is anxious for a summer in Chicago - JAMES JAMIESON busy in Wilmington, Delaware school with a branch in Dover- our old friend SONIA WOJCAKOWSKA will teach in his school for six months - KELLY BROWN dancing nightly in "Goldilocks" and busy with TV commercials, KELLY & ISABEL expecting their third - KENNETH & MILLIE MacKENZIE now with three children - BUD TYGETT & GILDO DI NUNZIO vacationing in Paris with NANISI CLEMENTS joining their company when rehearsals resume - CHARLES BENNETT in an off Broadway show of Agnes DeMille's titled "Juno" - DUSTY WORRALL hospitalized for two weeks after returning from a vacation in

Mexico, she is now back in "Music Man" - old time pupil LOUIS YETTER is now director of a parental association for mentally retarded children in California - JEAN DOVELL ELLIOT expecting her third child in May, apparently both her girls are carrying on the ballet tradition - MANY FAMILY all well, busy, dancing, school, charity and horseplay, etc. ... MICKEY recently danced at the U.S. Marine Hospital - BONNIE WEST PICKERT turning into a real New Englander and we hear she is still on stilts - KAREN FAHRENBACH dancing in "Nutcracker" at University of Utah December 26 - 31 - SUZANNE CHAPPELL with her own school in Decatur, doing well and loving it - SUSAN FURLONG now teaching speech in Lake Forest school - modest of them all JACK WARNER now in a new musical "Whoop-Up" in Boston, with sentimental yearnings for a tall gal with blond ringlets and shimsy skirt too long recently turned over to the British - DEAN DIGGINS now resting in New York after a strenuous tour in clubs - this could go on and on but now a few words about the home front - out-of-town visitors during the holidays - JAMES MOORE, JOHN & PHYLLIS SHARPE, CARLO MANALIJ, BETTY & DIANE STEFFEN and ALICIA HODGKIN ... Ballet Theatre lay-off brought home RUTH ANN KOESUN, JOHN KRIZA and DARNELL NOTARA ... good to have them home and in class - JOHN WIDMER'S mother recently passed away in Kansas City and he is not expected to return until after the New Year ... JOHN has had a busy year rehearsing with SC, SYBIL SHEARER and LORETTA ROZAK besides all his teaching ... the blizzard of the year arrived the day of the Hinsdale concert, however, a good sized crowd turned out despite it new on the program a small ballet by Mr. STONE called "A Friend Is Someone Who Likes You" ... everyone danced well and the program was well liked ... the two programs at the Spaulding School for Crippled children was probably the most gratifying program the school has ever

done anywhere ... RUTH PAGE'S CHICAGO BALLET COMPANY will be off on its annual tour the middle of January ... this year BENTLEY STONE will be guest artist and will be the only artist to dance two ballets a night ... DOLORES LIPINSKI & ETTA BURO are now billed as soloists and WILLIAM MALONEY will be much more prominent in the ballets this season ... only new ballet will be "Camille" ... MARJORIE TALLCHIEF and GEORGE SKIBINE are back this year and a new unknown VERONIKA MIAKAR ... during MR. STONE'S absence MR. C. will occasionally have guest teachers ... LILLIAN MOORE, prominent New York teacher and writer from The American Ballet Center will teach in January ... Later GERTRUDE JORY Detroit's first teacher, who has been one of the leaders of the Cecchetti Council since its inception will teach a week ... rehearsals are progressing on "Like A Weeping Willow" and "Alice" now being cast for a spring performance ...

REVIEW OF "ARTIST'S LIFE" by Agna Enters.  
Polly Harding . . . (Age 15)

Artist's Life by Agna Enters is the personal chronicle of a singularly individual and versatile artist. She is both a painter and a mime, and, as this unique combination has, after a few uncertain seasons at the beginning, been continually successful since the 1920's.

Her book is in the nature of a journal covering the past 30 odd years, but sometimes it takes on the characteristics of a memorandum written more for herself than a reader's elucidation. It is long and though continually interesting I couldn't help becoming irritated, partly because of the disjointed form, but mainly because I felt she was not presenting herself to full advantage - that she was not presenting that aspect of herself about which people would most like to hear.

Those who know her performances would be more interested, I think, in the how's and why's of her technique of probing her creation's souls rather than in details of production, and those who do not know her performances, would not, through these details, get a clear picture of what she does on stage.

I also wondered why, for someone who works so much with history and its reflections in character that she did not include more

of this aspect of her own life. Her brief accounts of pre-war European experiences were engaging, but incomplete because of their impersonality. I would have liked a little less of this throughout the book.

By what I have said, I don't mean to imply that I don't think this book is worth reading. I think anyone interested in any art would find a great deal of value in it. Her dedication is a lesson in itself. I think I would recommend it to anyone who would appreciate insight into the mind, even if not always the heart, of a remarkable artist.

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#### ANSWERS TO OCTOBER 20th QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Dance a Creative Art Experience  
by Margaret H'Doubler
2. The Wonderful O by James Thurber
3. The Round Dance Book by Lloyd Shaw
4. Now We Are Six by A. A. Milne
5. Platero and I by Juan Ramon Jimenez
6. A Dictionary of Ballet Terms  
by Leo Kersley and Janet Sinclair
7. The American Songbag by Carl Sandburg
8. The Waltz by Mosco Carner

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#### QUESTIONNAIRE on Programs with SC Dancers

1. How many have played the part of the White Rabbit in "Alice"?
2. Who was the original Ferdinand and who has danced it since?
3. Who was the Balloon Vendor in "The Wall"?
4. What two dancers danced the Little Nigger dance in Mr. C's "Aida"?
5. What former dancer, now the wife of a famous news correspondent, danced in many early SC programs?
6. What local artist danced in early SC Programs
7. What well known New York modern dancer danced in early SC Programs?
8. Who is the Dance Director and choreographer in a very famous theatre who danced in early SC programs?
9. Name three dancers who danced the part of the tight rope dancer in "That Daring Young Man"?
10. Who played Jimmy the Flea in Eloise Moore's "Rootabaga Stories" in 1945?
11. Who was the Foofooraw in Mr. Stone's Ballet by that name?
12. In 1940 Mr. Stone choreographed a dance called "Navy Jack" - who danced it?

## FROM A DANCER'S SCRAPBOOK

Poverty when coupled with creativeness is usually free of frustration.

Eric Hoffer

Ugliness can be beautiful - prettiness never!

Paul Gauguin

There is never so much that it cannot vanish, nor so little that it cannot do -

Slovak Proverb

Be not simply good; be good for something.

Thoreau

It was one of those plays in which all the actors unfortunately enunciated very clearly.

Robert Benchley

If one is modest, his fame will accumulate.

Hsun Tzu

An Arabic Proverb says -

Silence is often an answer.

### NOTES ON CHARACTER: by Walter Camryn

One of the most significant contributions of the early Russian Ballet was their development of character work and the importance they came to give the miming of roles in ballet. There was a conscious exploring of new sources for dramatic dance.

Where Petipa used traditional classic dance steps in the national idiom the Russians used a broader exploration of the dramatic elements of their story material. Michael Fokine in his ballets replaced the old conventional stylized gestures with more expressive mime and movement. Since the days of Fokine there has been some good and much bad in the teaching of character work because few teachers have known or felt the importance of this work. With careful observation it is apparent that there are many more top classical dancers than there are character artists.

Here in America character dancing has had a reviviscence in the theatre and in some of its Ballet companies. This spurt of vigor is not due so much to the excellence of training as it is to the natural gifts of American dancers and choreographers who are not unlike the Russians in temperament. The exploration into American folk materials brought new vitality into the work and has broadened the scope of character dancing.

To understand an idea completely one must constantly redefine it to oneself. With this in mind let us consider the meaning of character in relation to the dance. The dictionary describes character as - "the combination of qualities distinguishing any person, or class of persons, any distinctive mark or trait, or such marks or traits collectively, belonging to any person, class or race; the personality with which an actor or dancer identifies himself or the role illustrating or embodying it."

Starting from this premise we can realize that character is an element in almost everything about us. In the dance we can classify it into several types, such as national, dramatic and lyric, grotesque satire and mimicry. In preparing a dancer, actor or singer for the modern theatre, the national type is of least importance to the student.

In the beginning the study of character we should observe those qualities that distinguish one person or class of people from another; what is unusual in their manner of movement; their mannerisms or their ideas and how they express them. These traits are the result of something within their natures formed through their thinking, their habits and environment. Observe people in daily life on the streets, at their work, at play or during their leisure. There is a wealth of material to study everywhere you look everyday of your life.

In the study of character nothing need be haphazard or left to chance. Every part of the body which participates in a movement does so in obeyance to certain physical and physiologic principles. A more detailed study of localized movements is necessary to help the student analyze the more complex movements where each part of the body moves in its own pattern. Analysis of movement is not the end desired but it is a means to presenting new movement patterns more clearly; of improving old patterns and is especially helpful in the breaking down of habitual peculiarities that are hard to break. Most important it makes the student's observative powers and insight more astute in deciding what is most significant for recreating an idea. Good character work is the result of skillful use of the technique out of which

character is formed and up to a certain point body motions can express almost anything one might desire to express. Art is never natural; it only appears to be. The performer actually creates an illusion and this illusion evolves from the careful selection of various techniques and ideas, when well coordinated give an impression of reality. One begins by searching ones thoughts and feelings, then by planning, blocking out, trying and discarding, mastering the body and mind so that they are in perfect coordination. At this point the performer can give a sincere characterization. An unprepared performer can only give a shallow and dishonest performance. If he cannot duplicate exactly the same performance each time it is given he cannot be said to be in control of his art. Improvisation as an exercise to gain freedom is an excellent idea but it cannot be relied on when one has a definite thing to say.

The body technique of character differs from ballet as much as does modern. Where classical ballet is light and the upbeat of the music is accented by lifting well off the floor, character work is performed into the floor with the dancer almost always in demi plie. The down beat is accented usually with frequent stress on the syncopated beats. When jumping is used the legs are usually pulled up under the body rather than trying for a high elevation from the floor. All movement should be charged with feeling and expression. The dancer should learn early to motivate each movement and gesture he makes, thinking of character as expressive movement and keeping the entire body in rhythmic harmony.

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"J.B." - review by Sue Greenfield.

When Archibald MacLeish's new play, "J.B." opened at the ANTA Theatre in New York several weeks ago, the newspaper strike kept the reviews out of print.. That very night, the reviewers, the actors and others connected with this play appeared on radio and television to spread the gospel, and their comments were heard and apparently heeded by the

theatre going public. For "J.B." is playing to a packed house every night, and already several critics' awards are predicted for it.

The story of "J.B." is the Book of Job, retold as a modern parable. The characters are modern but they speak in free verse. The play unfolds in a circus tent where a balloon peddler and a popcorn vendor are discussing the story of Job. They pick up masks as they come down the aisles of the theatre, then, jump on the stage and narrate the story of Job before our eyes. The setting is austere and the audience is clearly prepared for the agonizing experiences that befall Job. As in the Old Testament, he loses everything but his faith; his children burn to death by fire, auto accident and murderous assault; his home by bombing, he is plagued by a skin disease as a result of the bombing; finally his wife leaves him too, for she cannot accept Job's philosophy. Job never curses or admonishes God for the cruelties that he is plagued with. He merely accepts. And this, I think, is where the play falls down, or as Job portrays it, on his knees; without questioning the why of it in human terms. Job accepts his guilt although he knows he has not sinned. And when God has restored his wife to him, he finds his answer in the strength of Love, and we are to suppose that they "live happily ever after". Compared to the powerful and moving first act, I felt cheated by this abrupt ending. Raymond Massey portrays the balloon vendor who portrays God in the Massey tradition, majestic and imposing. The popcorn vendor who wears the Devil's mask is Christopher Plummer; a versatile actor, he plays his part spectacularly. The part of J.B. or Job is done with strong feeling by Pat Hingle. Truly the cast is extraordinary and it would be hard to imagine this play a success without these skilled people. If the play did not live up to my expectations, the fault was not in the casting.

Whether or not one agrees with the philosophy of "J.B.", it was surely a memorable night in the theatre.

## THE HISTORY OF DANCE: by Loretta Rozak

The beginnings of dance in Greece were mingled with myths. Pan, Apollo, Mercury, Athene and others appear as patrons and exemplars of that art. One of the muses, Terpsichore, was the special patroness of the art of Dancing.

As far back as 1506 B.C. there were outstanding musicians, dancers and singers. We owe much to the labors of the bygone writers. Lately, in the ancient treasure house at Delphic, many inscriptions were found which pertained to the art of dancing. Dances were given before the Delphic which is the famous sanctuary of Apollo; Cretan choruses moving in rhythmic pace, sang hymns there.

In reading ancient Greek history, I was struck by an outstanding feature - the Greeks never danced to music. They seemed to have used instruments solely to accompany voices. Even in the Greek tragedies which were performed in immense theatres open to the sky, the dancers moved without music. On these occasions, the only instruments were usually two flutes, to accompany only the singing body, which was never larger than fifteen.

So important were dances to the Greeks, that labors and law-pleadings were suspended for weeks at a time in honor of social occasions. One of the most important Greek festivals was the Liberalia, in which a boy who had reached a suitable age, was formally admitted to manhood. The day ended with feasting and merrymaking and special dances were performed by all the eligible girls of the city.

One of the outstanding modern exponents of ancient Greek dancing, who lived in the early 20th century, was Isadora Duncan. Miss Duncan was an American girl who became infatuated with Greek dancing and sculpture. She and her brother, who was a painter, travelled to Greece and lived for many years among the ruins of ancient Greek temples. Isadora Duncan then began the Grecian or Natural (as she called) style of dancing, which brought her fame. At that time Ballet was considered the only type of classical dancing and many disputes arose between the two schools of dancing.

(NEXT - ROMAN DANCING)

## · SPAULDING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

By: Karen Krych

On December 10th the Stone Camryn Ballet group gave two performances for the children at the Spaulding School for crippled children. The first performance was of High School age and the second was for very small children, most of them in wheel chairs or little carts.

The complete enjoyment was so apparent that we have been invited by both the students and faculty to return again next year.

Whether it was the brief and cryptic speech preceding the program, given by the Principal on the proper way to behave or their true delight in our dancing (we all hope it was the latter) they certainly responded with happy laughter and applause.

When each dance finished we were inspired and thrilled by their pleas for more. This appreciation, one must admit is rare for most programs in this area.

Each dance had its staunch supporters with the audience and the popularity reached its peak with the "Bavarian Brawl" which they loved. This experience shall be remembered by all who performed and we are looking forward to our next visit there.

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## NEWLY ELECTED JUNIOR BOARD

of the

UPSTAIRS CLUB

President . . . . . Karen Krych

Vice-President . . . . . Polly Harding

Secretary . . . . . Barbara Westerhoff

Treasurer . . . . . Joan Green

Way & Means Chairman . . . Toni Kutyna

The purpose of the Junior Board is to promote the interest in the Upstairs Club among the younger set and to express their opinions

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